

Parent-Professional Partnerships

Basic Values of Parent-Professional Partnerships are those of:

- mutual respect for people's time;
- genuine concern for one another;
- *willingness to be human and vulnerable*;
- communication of honest feelings and opinions in a positive, effective manner;
- valuing the opinions of one another;
- an awareness of and *empathy* for the feelings and responsibilities of others;
- willingness to learn from each other, with the realization that everyone can learn;
- *continuous desire to improve and learn as we work together*.

Some of the *ways that both Parents and Professionals can promote Partnerships* are to:

- have regular meetings or appointments with one another, to "keep in touch;"
- share something with one another that will benefit all people living and working with the child, something one knows, and the other doesn't;
- seek awareness of major events within a family that may be impacting the child;
- engage in *informal communication* with one another;
- offer solutions to one another instead of criticizing or complaining;
- recognize and utilize the expertise of one another;
- provide opportunities for children, families and professionals to participate together in special events outside the typical interactive setting;
- be organized and prepared;
- *welcome opportunities to spend time together*;
- plan purposeful ways for parents and professionals to solve mutual problems together;
- help one another find time to deal with the issues each faces;
- find ways for both parents and professionals to *understand* issues impacting both of them;
- do nice things for one another, especially on a bad day!
- learn how to be facilitators, not dictators;
- *acknowledge the importance of each other's roles*.

Some *benefits and outcomes* of Parent-Professional Partnerships are:

- great, *long-lasting friendships!*
- *good things happen in communities!*
- communities celebrate the diversity of families and children;
- parents and professionals become efficient and effective problem solvers;
- parents and professionals both have feelings of accomplishment;
- parents and professionals assume responsibility appropriately;
- families learn to solve challenges "for themselves," not "by themselves;"
- outward displays of appreciation;
- feelings of trust for one another;
- recognizing the value of both parents and professionals *receiving* assistance and *giving* assistance to one another;
- team members value information shared by *all* team members;
- families and professionals recognize the value of family-to-family relationships;
- *children become productive citizens, proud of their accomplishments*.